

4 predetermined standard and selectively allow transmission of such packets from the
5 network to a protocol driver.

1 31. (New) The distributed packet based security system of claim 30, wherein the
2 install is performed using a patching technique.

1 32. (New) The distributed packet based security system of claim 30, wherein each of
2 the plurality computers form a shared memory buffer between a user space that stores
3 first code of the distributed packet based security system and a system address space that
4 stores the protocol driver and second code of the distributed packet based security system,
5 wherein said second code is coupled to said shared memory to store information
6 regarding packets received over the network, and wherein said first code is coupled to the
7 shared memory buffer to evaluate information stored in the shared memory buffer.

1 33. (New) The distributed packet based security system of claim 30, wherein the
2 install is performed remotely from a host computer on said network.

1 34. (New) A computer system comprising:
2 a plurality of networked computers each including,
3 a media access control unit coupled to the physical transmission medium
4 of the network to extract packets from data provided across said medium;
5 a protocol driver coupled to the media access control unit; and
6 filter code installed in between the media access control unit and the
7 protocol driver and enabled without shutdown or restart to evaluate said packets and
8 selectively allow continued transmission of different ones of said packets to the protocol
9 driver.

1 35. (New) The computer system of claim 34, wherein the install is performed using a
2 patching technique.

1 36. (New) The computer system of claim 34, wherein each of the plurality computers
2 includes a shared memory buffer between a user space that stores a security application
3 and a system address space that stores the media access control unit, the protocol driver,
4 and the filter code, wherein said filter code is coupled to said shared memory to store
5 information regarding packets received over the network, and wherein said security
6 application is coupled to the shared memory buffer to evaluate information stored in the
7 shared memory buffer.

1 37. (New) The computer system of claim 34, wherein the install is performed
2 remotely from a host computer on said network.

1 38. (New) A computer implemented method comprising:
2 distributing from a remote host across a network to a plurality of computers code
3 to be installed by each of said plurality of computers, each of said plurality of computers
4 including routines to be executed to provide a communication path between a media
5 access control unit coupled to the network and a protocol driver, said communication path
6 for packets transmitted across said network;
7 transmitting from the remote host to each of the plurality of computers a
8 command to cause each of the plurality of computers to execute said code; and
9 each of the plurality of computers responsive to said command performing,
10 installing a driver in the communication path between the media access
11 control unit and the protocol driver, said installed driver being enabled, without restart of
12 said computer, to evaluate selectively allowing continued transmission of different ones
13 of said packets received over said network along the communication path.

1 39. (New) The method of claim 38, wherein said installing is performed using a
2 patching technique.

1 40. (New) The method of claim 38, wherein each of the plurality computers
2 responsive to said command also perform, forming a shared memory buffer between a
3 system address space that stores the protocol driver and a user space that stores a security
4 application, wherein said driver is coupled to said shared memory to store information
5 regarding packets received over the network, wherein said application is coupled to the
6 shared memory buffer to evaluate information stored in the shared memory buffer.

1 41. (New) The method of claim 39 wherein said installing includes installing the
2 driver in-between the network driver interface and the protocol driver.

1 42. (New) A machine-readable medium that provides instructions, which when
2 executed by a set of processors, cause said set of processors to perform operations
3 comprising:

4 distributing from a remote host across a network to a plurality of computers code
5 to be installed by each of said plurality of computers, each of said plurality of computers
6 including routines to be executed to provide a communication path between a media
7 access control unit coupled to the network and a protocol driver, said communication path
8 for packets transmitted across said network;

9 transmitting from the remote host to each of the plurality of computers a
10 command to cause each of the plurality of computers to execute said code; and
11 each of the plurality of computers responsive to said command performing,
12 installing a driver in the communication path between the media access
13 control unit and the protocol driver, said installed driver being enabled, without restart of

14 said computer, to evaluate selectively allowing continued transmission of different ones
15 of said packets received over said network along the communication path.

1 43. (New) The machine-readable medium of claim 42, wherein said installing is
2 performed using a patching technique.

1 44. (New) The machine-readable medium of claim 42, wherein each of the plurality
2 computers responsive to said command also perform, forming a shared memory buffer
3 between a system address space that stores the protocol driver and a user space that stores
4 a security application, wherein said driver is coupled to said shared memory to store
5 information regarding packets received over the network, wherein said application is
6 coupled to the shared memory buffer to evaluate information stored in the shared memory
7 buffer.

1 45. (New) A computer implemented method comprising:
2 installing into each of a plurality of computers on a network code that is part of a
3 distributed packet security system, said code being installed such that packets transmitted
4 across said network to a given one of said plurality of computers is received by said code
5 before being provided to a protocol driver;
6 at least the first of said plurality of computers without being shutdown or
7 restarted,
8 receiving a packet from said network; and
9 said code executing on said first computer selectively forwarding said
10 packet onto the protocol driver depending upon parameters of the distributed packet base
11 security system.

1 46. (New) The method of claim 45, wherein said installing is performed using a
2 patching technique.

1 47. (New) The method of claim 45, wherein said installing is performed remotely
2 over said network.

1 48. (New) A machine-readable medium that provides instructions, which when
2 executed by a set of processors, cause said set of processors to perform operations
3 comprising:

4 installing and enabling, without shutdown or restart, on each of a plurality of
5 computers on a network code that is part of a distributed packet security system, said code
6 being installed such that packets transmitted across said network to a given one of said
7 plurality of computers is received by said code before being provided to a protocol
8 driver;

9 wherein said code, when executed responsive to one of said plurality of computers
10 receiving a packet from said network, selectively forwards said packet onto the protocol
11 driver depending upon parameters of the distributed packet base security system.

1 49. (New) The machine-readable medium of claim 48, wherein said installing is
2 performed using a patching technique.

1 50. (New) The machine-readable medium of claim 48, wherein said installing is
2 performed remotely over said network.

1 51. (New) A computer implemented method comprising:
2 installing into each of a plurality of computers on a network first and second code
3 that is part of a distributed packet security system, said first code being installed in a user

4 address space, said second code being installed in a system address space, said second
5 code being installed such that packets transmitted across said network to a given one of
6 said plurality of computers is received by said second code before being providing to a
7 protocol driver in said system space;

8 at least the first of said plurality of computers without being shutdown or
9 restarted,

10 receiving a packet from said network;

11 said second code storing at least certain information from said packet into a
12 shared memory buffer between the user address space and the system address space; and
13 said first code accessing information from said shared memory buffer.

1 52. (New) The method of claim 51, wherein said installing is performed using a
2 patching technique.

1 53. (New) The method of claim 51, wherein said installing is performed remotely
2 over said network.

1 54. (New) The method of claim 51, wherein said second code is in a communication
2 path between a network driver interface and the protocol driver.

1 55. (New) A machine-readable medium that provides instructions, which when
2 executed by a set of processors, cause said set of processors to perform operations
3 comprising:

4 installing and enabling, without shutdown or restart, on each of a plurality of
5 computers on a network first and second code that is part of a distributed packet security
6 system, said first code being installed in a user address space, said second code being
7 installed in a system address space, said second code being installed such that packets